

Washington, D.C. – Earlier this year, the EPA announced it would enter into a consent decree with Earthjustice and establish Numeric Nutrient Levels for waters in the state of Florida. This followed several years of research and public input by the state in preparing to set its own rules. Congressman Rooney lead the delegation in sending a letter to the EPA asking the agency to work with the state and utilize its extensive science, data and research as it formulates the rules for Florida.

“Florida has spent over \$19 million and several years collecting the necessary data, sound science and community input to develop standards that are realistic and attainable for Florida,” said Rooney. “As the EPA begins to establish nutrient levels for Florida waters, it is important for the state to be a part of the decision process and to use the invaluable information that has been collected. This bipartisan letter signed by twenty-five members of our delegation simply asks EPA to work with Florida and utilize its data.”

The text of the letter is attached and below:

Administrator Lisa P. Jackson
United State Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

As members of the Florida delegation, we are writing today regarding the proposed EPA numeric nutrient rules for our state. While we all value the health of our waterways, this regulatory change will also have economic impacts on the state, and thus it is important that the standards are based on the best available science.

As we are sure you are aware, Florida has spent several years working with the EPA and over \$19 million to collect the necessary data, sound science and community input in developing numeric criteria under the Clean Water Act. We were encouraged to read in your January 14th letter that said the EPA planned to “work closely and collaboratively with the State of Florida to

ensure that these numeric nutrient criteria are protective of applicable designated uses, based on sound scientific rationale, responsive to the specific needs of Florida's waters, responsive to available public and stakeholder input, and sufficient to meet the needs of the State's complete suite of water quality management tools." We respectfully ask that as you finalize the proposed rules for the state you work with Florida's Department of Environmental Protection in an open, collaborative manner and utilize its extensive resources of science and data on this issue.

To date, the Florida Nutrient Technical Advisory Committee has met 22 times to openly evaluate and consider the data with industry input from manufacturing to agriculture. This is an excellent model that we strongly encourage you to consider using as you move through this process. The proposed rule will have a widespread effect on Florida's industry and economy, and all concerned parties should be heard.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns. As you can imagine, this is a very important issue to our state. Florida will be the first state subject to such federal rules, so it is essential that the water quality standards are based on sound science and that all parties concerned have an opportunity to be heard.

Sincerely,

Rep. Tom Rooney
Senator Bill Nelson
Senator George LeMieux
Rep. Adam Putnam
Rep. Jeff Miller
Rep. Allen Boyd
Rep. Kendrick Meek
Rep. John Mica
Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Rep. Ginny Brown Waite
Rep. Lincoln Diaz Balart
Rep. Alcee L. Hastings
Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Rep. Mario Diaz Balart
Rep. Ander Crenshaw
Rep. Cliff Stearns
Rep. Bill Posey
Rep. Vern Buchanan

Rep. Connie Mack IV
Rep. Suzanne Kosmas
Rep. Gus Bilirakis
Rep. Corrine Brown
Rep. C.W. Bill Young
Rep. Alan Grayson
Rep. Ron Klein